

CLAIMS

I claim:

1. An apparatus, comprising:
a processor; and
5 a plurality of ports, connected to the processor, for receiving inputs and providing outputs;
whereupon receiving an input which includes an edit for a file, the processor executes the edit and outputs, via the plurality of ports, an update for the file such that at least one of a plurality of user devices can receive the update substantially
10 contemporaneously with the execution of the edit.
2. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the apparatus further comprises a host computer.
3. The apparatus of claim 2, wherein the plurality of ports are connected to a communications network connecting the host computer with a plurality of user
15 devices.
4. The apparatus of claim 3, wherein the communications network is an analog network and the ports include an interface between the analog network and at least one signal provided by the processor.
5. The apparatus of claim 4, wherein the interface further comprises a modem.
- 20 6. The apparatus of claim 3, wherein the communications network further comprises a digital network.
7. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the processor is capable of multi-tasking.
8. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the apparatus functions as a server for a communications network which can establish a connection between the apparatus and
25 at least one user device.
9. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the file includes a computer representation.
10. The apparatus of claim 9, wherein the computer representation includes computer graphics.
- 30 11. The apparatus of claim 9, wherein the computer representation includes text.

12. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the edit further comprises an editing instruction.

13. An apparatus, comprising:

a processor;

5 a plurality of ports, connected to the processor, for receiving inputs from at least one user device and providing outputs to at least one other user device; and an application program running on the processor;

whereupon receiving an input, from a user device, which includes an edit for a file, the application program executes the edit and outputs, via the plurality of ports,
10 an update for the file such that the at least one other user device can receive the update substantially contemporaneously with the execution of the edit.

14. The apparatus of claim 13, wherein the processor is capable of multi-tasking.

15. The apparatus of claim 13, wherein at least one of the application program
15 and the file can be obtained from a data storage device accessible by the processor.

16. The apparatus of claim 15, wherein the data storage device is a local to the apparatus.

17. The apparatus of claim 15, wherein the data storage device is remote to the apparatus.

20 18. The apparatus of claim 13, wherein the application program is non-persistent.

19. The apparatus of claim 13, wherein the plurality of ports are connected to an interconnecting means.

25 20. The apparatus of claim 19, wherein the interconnecting means further comprises:

an analog communications network;

a first modem, for connecting the at least one user device to the analog communications network; and

30 a second modem, for connecting at least one of the plurality of ports to the analog communications network.

21. The apparatus of claim 20, wherein the second modem is connected to the at least one of a plurality of ports via a digital communications network.

22. The apparatus of claim 1, wherein the interconnecting means further comprises a digital communications network.

23. The apparatus of claim 22, wherein the digital communications network includes a local area network.

5 24. The apparatus of claim 23, wherein the digital communications network interconnects at least two local area networks.

25. The apparatus of claim 24, wherein the digital communications network includes a hub interconnecting at least one of the at least two local area networks with a second network.

10 26. The apparatus of claim 24, wherein at least one of the two local area networks include a switch.

27. The apparatus of claim 24, wherein the at least two local area networks are interconnected via a bridge.

15 28. The apparatus of claim 24, wherein the at least two local area networks are interconnected via a gateway.

29. The apparatus of claim 24, wherein the at least two local area networks are interconnected via a router.

30. The system of claim 13, wherein the file includes computer graphics.

20 31. The system of claim 13, wherein the file includes alphanumeric characters.